

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

A281.9
Ag83E
Cop2

ERS-132

*RURAL
RESIDENTS
and
URBAN
EXPANSION*

U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY

OCT 14 1963

CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

Farm Production Economics Division Economic Research Service
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
in cooperation with Institute for Community Development and Services
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

PREFACE

This report is based on a cooperative study by the Farm Production Economics Division, Economic Research Service, and the Institute for Community Development and Services at Michigan State University.

The interviewing for the study was done by graduate students assigned to the Institute. Charles Adrian, Walter Freeman, and J. F. Thaden of the Institute, and C. J. Hein, Frederick D. Stocker, and William H. Heneberry, Farm Production Economics Division, Economic Research Service, contributed to the planning of the study and assisted in developing the questionnaires and interpreting the data.

The authors wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mel Avery, Ingham County Agricultural Extension Agent, for background information on farming in the area, and Glen Watkins, Alaiedon Township Supervisor, and Mrs. Watkins for information on the history and present development of the township.

Charles Press
Rodger Rice

East Lansing, Mich.

Washington, D.C.

September 1963

CONTENTS

	Page
Summary	v
Introduction.....	1
Alaiedon Township.....	1
Nonfarm residents.....	3
Trends in nonfarm settlement.....	5
Quality of housing and attitudes of residents.....	7
Residents of substandard housing	8
Commercial activities.....	11
Nonfarmers contrasted with farmers	12
Community ties.....	13
Local government.....	14
Incorporation and annexation	15
Land use.....	15
Reciprocal attitudes of nonfarmers and farmers	17
Findings and their implications.....	17

SUMMARY

This report of nonfarm residents in a township on the edge of the Lansing, Mich., metropolitan area complements an earlier one of farmers in the same township. Similar questions were asked in both surveys, so that responses might be compared.

The objective of the study was to obtain data on attitudes toward the problems that urbanization would cause for farmers and nonfarm rural residents and for the township government.

Nonfarmers were found typically to be blue collar workers, probably raised outside the township and county; to have families with school age children; and to live predominantly on scattered-out individual lots. Heads of households were likely to be under 40 years old. Many had built their own homes or extensively remodeled them. In general, nonfarm residents fitted the pattern one might expect in a community with inexpensive land and few building regulations, where a man accustomed to working with his hands could build a home more cheaply than in a more settled community.

The type of nonfarm resident was beginning to change, however. A comparison of nonfarmers who had recently moved into the township with earlier nonfarm residents showed the newcomers as a group to have more urban characteristics than the earlier settlers. They were more likely to be white collar workers, and generally were better educated and had higher incomes. Fewer of them had farm backgrounds or had been raised in the township or county. As a group they were less opposed to urbanization of the area, and expected urbanization to take place more rapidly. A larger proportion said that, if they moved, it would be to an established suburb.

Nonfarm residents of substandard housing were unlike other nonfarm residents in a number of ways. They were more likely to favor preserving the rural farm atmosphere of the township than other nonfarm residents. Three-fourths thought some of the land in the township should be permanently zoned as agricultural; 80 percent were of the opinion that high taxes might force farmers to sell out. They showed the greatest opposition to annexation to the city; most of them would want to move if the area became heavily suburbanized. They were more likely than other nonfarm

residents to be opposed to strengthening building codes, to consider school taxes too high, and to oppose business and industrial development in the township.

The early commercial pattern of the township was similar to the early nonfarm residential pattern. Most commercial enterprises were sidelines begun by amateurs, usually nonfarmers, in their homes on a part time basis. The early subdivisions also fitted this pattern, with all but one development consisting of a few lots along existing blacktop roads on which houses had been built by the buyers or their contractors.

Compared to the farmers in the earlier survey, nonfarmers were found to be on the average younger, better educated, and in higher income brackets. They had usually lived in the township for a shorter time. They were more likely to have children of school age, and were more likely to be living in mortgaged homes. As would be expected, they were less frequently members of farm organizations and more frequently members of labor unions. When farmers were divided into commercial farmers and suburban farmers (those holding full-time city jobs and farming on a small scale), suburban farmers were found in general to be in an intermediate position between nonfarmers on the one hand and the group making their living from farming on the other.

The same relationship held with respect to the greater tendency of nonfarmers to obtain medical services outside the county and to favor greater expenditures for education. Nonfarmers had less knowledge about and participated less in township government than either farm group (except that about the same proportion in all groups said they had voted). Here also the suburban farmers were in the intermediate position.

Nonfarmers as a group thought that urbanization would occur more quickly than the farmers did, though viewpoints were affected by area of residence. The nonfarmers hoped to preserve a rural residential environment. They regarded urbanization as inevitable but hoped it might be guided, particularly in having development by individual lots instead of large scale subdivision. They also tended to favor permanent agricultural zoning and lower taxes for

land kept in agricultural use. They opposed most consistently those aspects of urbanization typical of large cities.

The tendency revealed by the study for nonfarm settlers to be increasingly urban-oriented is of particular interest to farmers in areas similar to Alaiedon Township. Apparently it is during the early stages of

urbanization that farmers are most likely to have the cooperation of their nonfarm neighbors in using such means as special tax and zoning regulations to protect their interests and insure an orderly change from a farming area to an area of mixed urban and farm uses.

RURAL RESIDENTS AND URBAN EXPANSION

by

Charles Press and Rodger Rice
Institute for Community Development and Services
Michigan State University

INTRODUCTION

A survey was made in 1960 in a township lying on the fringe of a growing metropolitan area of the opinions of the farmers there concerning urban expansion into farm areas.¹ The present report rounds out the picture by describing opinions of nonfarm residents in the same township. The study of nonfarm residents was made in 1962. The overall objective of the two studies was to obtain information on attitudes that residents of such an area might be expected to have toward the increasing urbanization of their area.

Alaiedon Township, in Ingham County, Mich., was on the threshold of urbanization in 1960. Farming was still profitable, and approximately 95 percent of township land was in agricultural use. At the same time, nonfarmers outnumbered farmers by a two to one margin, and their number was continuing to grow as the number of farms gradually declined. It was a period when the decisions made would affect the development of the township for the next several generations.

In the first survey, a sample of farmers in the township were asked how soon they thought extensive urbanization of their township would occur, what problems nonfarm residents created for them, how much they participated in community social and political activities, and what steps they thought local government could take to meet local problems. The study of nonfarmers followed the same plan as the earlier study. In most cases, identical questions were asked.

In only one respect did the township change very much from 1960, when the farmers were interviewed, to a year and a half later when nonfarmers were sur-

veyed. At the time of the survey of farmers, the State Highway Department had acquired land, removed some farmhouses, and announced a timetable for the building of an interstate highway with an interchange in the northern tier of township sections. In 1962, when nonfarm residents were interviewed, initial staking and grading of right-of-way had begun. The authors believe that advance discussion of this project within the township minimized changes in viewpoint between the time of the two surveys. Data obtained in the second survey from a sample of farmers with less than 20 acres (omitted from the earlier study) supports this belief.

The earlier study confirmed a trend long known: many persons defined by census takers as farmers also held full-time city jobs. Further evidence of this movement from farming to city jobs was found in the present study. A large proportion of the nonfarm residents in Alaiedon Township were found to have farm backgrounds. An opposing movement of long-time city dwellers into rural townships was also found. The intermingling of these two types of nonfarm residents gives to a township in the earliest stage of suburbanization the distinctive character reported here.

ALAIEDON TOWNSHIP

The Lansing, Mich., Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area contained 300,000 people in 1960; 110,000 lived in Lansing city. Alaiedon Township is in the same county as Lansing. The township lies southeast of this automotive manufacturing center, and directly south of the suburb of East Lansing and the farms of the Michigan State University campus. Mason, the county seat of Ingham County, is south of the township. Mason had a population of 4,500 in 1960.

There is no incorporated place within the township, and at first glance it appears

¹ Press, Charles, and Hein, C. J. Farmers and Urban Expansion: A Study of a Michigan Township. U.S. Dept. Agr., Econ. Res. Serv. ERS-59, May 1962.

that the township is almost wholly agricultural. Yet in fact, by 1960 the nonfarm residents had reversed the situation reported in the previous census, and outnumbered farmers by a 70-30 ratio. Number of farms declined from 206 in 1945 to 167 in 1960.

From 1880 through 1920, township population declined steadily, but between 1920 and 1960 the number of residents increased from 896 to 2,060 (table 1). The most significant increase occurred in the 1950's, when nonfarm population increased 225 percent. This was accompanied by a decrease of nearly 50 percent in the farm population.

The road pattern of the township to a large extent explains patterns of land use. In the western half there are three north-south blacktop roads that carry traffic to Mason or East Lansing. In the eastern half there is only one, and it leads to no nearby urban center. Most urbanization has occurred in the western half of the township along the blacktop roads. Clusters of nonfarm residences in this segment are also found along the east-west blacktops, one forming the township's northern boundary, a second its southern boundary, and a third going through the center of the township.

A major north-south highway connecting Lansing, Mason, and Jackson cuts across the corner of the most southwesterly of the township's 36 sections. Very little land in this section was being farmed in 1962.

Three of the five developed subdivisions, another subdivision in the planning stage, and a few highway business establishments were located in this section. The western half of the township contained all of the subdivisions and 85 percent of the nonfarm residents.

A subdivision in Alaiedon has meant generally the platting of 10 or so frontage lots along a blacktop road and selling them off to individuals. Landlocked portions remain undeveloped. The subdivider's main contribution has been his selection of residents who will build homes up to a certain standard. In contrast, people building on individual lots have had little control over the type of building that might be placed on the next lot. In early subdivisions, standards were mainly set by the developer; since 1954 regulation by county and township has been increasing.

By 1962, there were five subdivisions in the township, and two more were in the process of being platted and approved (table 2). The land for most of these projects was acquired during World War II, with actual building beginning in the middle fifties. Houses in the subdivisions were usually built by the new resident or his contractor. Only one subdivision had more than 10 homes. This one was the only one with homes on a specially constructed side road. All other subdivisions were strung out along previously constructed blacktops.

TABLE 1.--Population of Alaiedon Township, Ingham County, Mich., 1880-1960

Year	Total	Rural farm	Rural nonfarm	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1880.....	1,474	--	--	--
1890.....	1,287	--	--	--
1900.....	1,172	--	--	--
1910.....	955	--	--	--
1920.....	896	--	--	--
1930.....	1,011	936	75	7
1940.....	1,132	751	381	37
1950.....	1,486	1,056	430	29
1960.....	2,060	662	1,398	68

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 2.-Summary data for subdivisions in Alaiedon Township, Ingham County, Mich., 1962

Subdivision	Date developer bought land	Date recorded with Register of Deeds ¹	Number of lots	Number of residences	Quarter of township in which located
Alaiedon Heights...	Unknown	1953	12	8	SW
Angell's Acres.....	1944	1953	63	21	SW
Brookside Hills....	1953	1953	14	10	NW
Harper Heights.....	1952	1958	10	8	SW
Sycamore Sites.....	1944	1955	15	7	NW
Proposed:					
Canaan Park.....	Unknown	1962	8	6	SW
Lynford Downs....	Unknown	1962	Unknown	Unknown	NW
Subdivision	Range of assessed value	Mean assessed value	Range in age of structures	Average age of structures	
	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Years</u>	
Alaiedon Heights...	1,800-2,700	2,300	5-7	5.8	
Angell's Acres.....	2,300-5,900	3,700	1-12	6.9	
Brookside Hills....	3,300-6,000	4,500	4-10	6.6	
Harper Heights.....	3,000-3,500	3,200	3-4	3.6	
Sycamore Sites.....	3,500-5,300	4,300	3-7	5.2	

¹ The current filing system in the Register of Deeds Office dates back only to 1953. Some of these subdivisions may have been recorded before that date.

NONFARM RESIDENTS

At the time of the survey, nonfarm settlement was still largely of the "pioneer" type. By finding, within easy commuting distance of the Lansing area, cheap land in an area with low property taxes, by building his own home with few building regulations to follow, and perhaps even by operating a sideline business from his house, many an early resident was able to acquire a higher grade of housing than he probably would have been able to afford in the central city or in a settled residential suburb. In addition, such a person could hope that his house and land would become more valuable as the area became more settled.

There were as yet no mammoth "Easter Egg Row" types of subdivisions. Seventy percent of nonfarm residents lived on individual lots. The five existing subdivisions were small groupings of homes in which

the resident had built the house himself or, more commonly, found a contractor to do it.

It should be no surprise that most nonfarm residents had fewer roots in the township than did farmers. What may be overlooked is that the recency of arrival of such residents is even greater than is revealed by overall migration figures earlier cited. Of our nonfarm sample, 42 percent had lived in their present homes less than 5 years; about three out of four had lived at their present addresses less than 10 years. Only 1 in 20 of the nonfarm residents had lived in the township more than 20 years.

Nonfarmers were not, however, without some local ties. In almost half the families the head of the household had been born in Ingham County. Nor were they without farming experience. In 80 percent of the households, either the wife or husband or both had been born on a farm. Fifteen

percent had themselves farmed for 5 years or more before taking a city job.

Almost two-thirds of the nonfarmers worked in blue collar jobs, generally in the automotive plants in Lansing. In one-quarter of the homes, the wife also worked full time. Less than half of the nonfarm families earned more than \$7,500 a year.

In almost half the homes the husband was less than 40 years old. Three-fourths of the families had school age children. Seventy percent had purchased individual lots rather than lots in subdivisions. Significantly, 41 percent had either built their own homes, had subcontracted the building, or had made major structural changes in the house.

Thus, nonfarm residents emerge mainly as younger persons with growing families. They were able to work with their hands and were familiar with a rural environment. Available for them was cheap land, a rural environment, and a minimum of building and zoning restrictions. Houses could be built by residents more cheaply and easily than they could in an established suburb or urban center.

The pattern of settlement was changing, however. More of the recent residents had moved into subdivisions than onto individual lots. No one in our sample who had lived in his present home more than 10 years lived in a subdivision. But a third of those who had occupied their present residence between 5 and 10 years, and 60 percent of those who had been in their present homes less than 5 years, lived in subdivisions.

The nonfarm residents in the survey who had moved into the township most recently were also buying higher priced homes (table 3). With homes of lower assessment levels, the proportion of longer residence increased. The main exceptions were homes in the lowest assessment category, consisting of jerry-built substandard housing which local residents referred to as "junkers." Many of those who lived in such rural slums were recent residents; almost half had lived in their present homes less than 5 years. However, the number of such homes was not increasing. The newest house in this category was built 7 years before the survey.

TABLE 3.--Length of residence in present home, nonfarm families grouped by assessed value of residence¹

Length of residence in present home (years)	Percentage of families with residences in tax assessment categories--					
	A \$4,600- \$9,000 (N = 10)	B \$3,000- \$4,500 (N = 34)	C \$2,100- \$2,900 (N = 32)	D \$1,300- \$2,000, neat (N = 31)	E \$300-\$1,900, substandard (N = 19)	All (N = 126)
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than 5.....	70	50	35	29	47	42
5-9.9.....	30	44	28	29	16	31
10-19.9.....	0	6	28	29	32	21
20 or more.....	0	0	9	13	5	6
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100

¹ Assessment categories used in this study are those of the Township Supervisor, with one exception. Those houses that, with their land, were valued at \$2,000 or less were categorized further into "small, but neat and well maintained" and those called by township residents "junkers." Most of the former class were assessed at \$2,000 level but a few were valued as low as \$1,300. The latter class of definitely substandard, poorly maintained housing had assessed values ranging from \$300 to \$1,900, with most valued below \$1,000. The higher assessments in this category result from including land value in the assessment figure.

Trends in Nonfarm Settlement

The earlier study described four types of farmers. The data in table 4 suggest that there may be significant differences among the nonfarm group also. We have described the early nonfarm residents as somewhat similar to pioneers on the frontier who improve their position by growing up with the community. It is logical then to look first for changes in the composition of the nonfarm group among recent residents, following the hypothesis that as nonfarm settlement increases and pioneering conditions disappear, a change in type of migrant will occur. Even at the early stage of nonfarm development that we found in Alaiedon Township, there were indications that such a change was taking place.

Certain characteristics suggest the direction of this change. In almost three-fourths of the nonfarm families, the

husband or wife or both had been born on a farm or had engaged in farming, but the proportion was less among recent nonfarm residents. Two-thirds of the older nonfarm residents were born in Ingham County. The newer nonfarm families increasingly came from other parts of Michigan or of the Nation. Proportionately more of the new migrants held white collar jobs, had some college training, were salaried, and had higher incomes. Fewer of the new migrants built their own homes or lived in old farm buildings, and more resided in subdivisions.

The differences between the two groups in age of household head, percentage of families having a mortgage, and size of family may not denote a change in settlement patterns. A check of age at time of settlement shows that, like the more recent residents, those who had lived in the township over 10 years came to the township

TABLE 4.--Social and economic characteristics, nonfarm families grouped by period of residence in township

Characteristics	Percentage of families residing in township--		
	Less than 5 years (N = 53)	5-9.9 years (N = 38)	10 years or more (N = 35)
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Farm background ¹	70	64	79
Mortgage on home.....	87	64	50
House assessed at \$3,000 or more.....	45	46	6
Built (or contracted for) own home.....	26	54	47
Moved into farmhouse.....	17	8	26
Household head--			
Had actual farm experience ²	11	15	24
Grew up outside Michigan.....	25	10	12
Grew up in Ingham County.....	36	49	65
Is blue collar worker.....	60	59	74
Is professional or technical worker....	21	13	9
Has some college training.....	34	21	21
Is under 40 years of age.....	56	41	32
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number</u>
Mean number of children in family.....	2.5	2.4	3.1
Mean size of family.....	3.9	3.8	4.4

¹ Husband and wife born or raised on a farm.

² Head of household had farmed 5 years or more.

on the average in their early thirties. Nevertheless, the difference in age and family size between old and new residents has important political implications, particularly since the recent-resident category is increasing in proportion to the total population. It means a change in the township towards what is generally regarded as a more typically suburban composition--a larger share of adult residents will be young, have families with small children, and be in process of buying their homes.

The relatively large proportion of recent migrants who had moved into farm buildings was accounted for by the turnover of tenants in such buildings, mostly those in the substandard housing category. There were few farm buildings lately converted to nonfarm use.

These data indicate a nonfarm population in the initial stages of change from county born, blue collar workers with a farm background to a more suburban type--white collar workers having fewer farm connections, and coming from outside the county. Among the recent migrants, however, there were still many residents of the earlier type. The indications are that Alaiedon Township at the time of the survey was on the threshold of extensive urbanization. The newer residents included

an increasing number willing to purchase ready-made housing. For such residents, the move to a rural environment was more likely to be a lateral one so far as income and social status were concerned.

How great a change had thus far occurred? Three characteristics are commonly associated with residents in a suburban environment: white collar employment, a nonfarm background, and previous residence outside the county. We should expect to find an increase of these traits as the character of Alaiedon non-farm residents changes.

Viewed in this perspective, the nonfarm residents of Alaiedon Township at the time of the survey were clearly in the process of transition. If we ask only whether the identifying characteristic was present in the household, we find that in 80 percent of the survey families either the husband or wife had a farm background, in 66 percent the husband held a blue collar job, and in 65 percent the husband or wife was born in Ingham County. Yet in only 8 percent of the households did both husband and wife have all of these characteristics, and in only 6 percent of the households did neither husband or wife have any of these characteristics (table 5). Thus in 86 percent of the homes there was a mixture of

TABLE 5.--Percentage of nonfarm families with specified numbers of suburban and nonsuburban characteristics¹

Item	Percentage of families with the specified number of--	
	Suburban characteristics	Nonsuburban characteristics
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Husband or wife has--		
Three.....	18	34
Two.....	45	38
One.....	29	22
None in household.....	8	6
	100	100

¹ Suburban characteristics: white collar work; no farm background; born outside county. Nonsuburban characteristics: blue collar work; farm background; born in county.

suburban and nonsuburban characteristics, with the balance slightly in favor of the nonsuburban traits.

A further analysis was made to determine whether husband or wife was more likely to introduce the nonlocal or nonfarm characteristic. The four categories were found to be nearly equal, indicating an almost perfect blend of suburban and nonsuburban characteristics in rural nonfarm households of the township.

Were these changes in the composition of the nonfarm population associated with differing opinions within that group? Table 6 shows such differences in opinions, suggesting that a gradual shift in opinions may be occurring as the composition of the nonfarm group changes. In most cases the division was between those in the township less than 10 years and residents of longer standing.

Quality of Housing and Attitudes of Residents

As indicated above, attitudes will change as the composition of nonfarm population changes. This poses the question of how

the nonfarm sample can best be classified to show the direction of these changes in attitude.

Length of residence alone does not provide the answer, as the new type of nonfarm resident has just begun to appear in significant numbers, while the number following the older pattern of pioneer settlement is only now leveling off. At the time of the survey, both pioneer types and the more urban types were entering the township.

One of the ways in which the old and new types of nonfarm residents may be expected to differ is in value of housing. Our hypothesis is that the higher cost homes built by contractors in better locations tend to be purchased by new residents buying houses comparable to those they are leaving, and that pioneer types seek lower cost housing at less choice locations.

The degree to which value of housing occupied by nonfarm residents is associated with traits generally associated with typical suburbanites is indicated by the data in table 7. A comparison with table 4 shows that value of housing is a better differentiator than time of moving into present

TABLE 6.--Opinions expressed about urbanization, nonfarm families grouped by length of residence in township

Opinions	Percentage of families residing in township--		
	Less than 5 years (N=53)	5-9.9 years (N=38)	10 years or more (N=35)
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Favor continued residential development.....	70	72	53
Favor liquor licenses within township.....	41	33	17
Favor greater regulation of farmers selling off lots ¹ ...	38	31	29
If moved, would move to established suburb.....	41	41	15
If moved, would move to rural nonfarm area.....	34	33	53
Township will be urbanized in 10 years or less ¹	56	53	47

¹ Those with "no opinion" omitted.

TABLE 7.--Social and economic characteristics, nonfarm families grouped by assessed value of residence

Characteristic	Percentage of families in assessment categories-- ¹		
	A and B (N = 44)	C and D (N = 63)	E (N = 19)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Husband or wife was white collar worker..	61	24	5
Household head had no farm background....	36	29	21
Family income over \$7,500.....	70	34	21
Less than 5 years in present residence...	55	32	47
Less than 10 years in present residence..	93	60	63
Household head under 40.....	52	46	52
Living in subdivision.....	61	20	0
Head had some college training.....	45	20	0
Head was raised in county.....	36	54	42
Doctor in Lansing or East Lansing.....	60	43	32
Respondent knew name of Township Supervisor.....	32	40	11
Respondent voted in 1961 township election.....	70	63	32

¹ See table 3 for dollar range of each category.

residence. Value of housing was also found to be more closely related to the different opinion categories than were such items as subdivision homes vs. homes on individual lots, white collar vs. blue collar employment, income, farm background, place of birth, or combinations of these traits.

As in much urban and suburban research, economic status provides a most useful tool for analysis of differences in opinion.

Families in substandard housing will be discussed further in a separate section because of their importance in suburban residential development of the township. Often the opinions of respondents in this group were inconsistent with an orderly trend that otherwise appeared from the high to the low categories.

The higher the assessment category, the more likely a resident was to favor continued urbanization of the township and the least likely to want to preserve the

semirural character of the area (table 8). Those in the higher assessment categories were more likely to favor increased land use regulations and higher taxes for the schools. They were more likely to regard township government as less important than county government (table 9). If future residents of the township tend to be more like this group, as seems probable, township opinion will shift toward favoring more urbanization, and taking further action on such suburban problems as schools and land use.

Residents of Substandard Housing

Before classifying houses as substandard, the authors checked each dwelling assessed below \$3,000 with the township supervisor. The houses classified as substandard were poorly built, and usually unfinished. Homes were overcrowded.

TABLE 8.--Opinions about urbanization, nonfarm families grouped by assessed value of residence

Opinions	Percentage of families with residences in tax assessment categories-- ¹				
	A (N = 10)	B (N = 34)	C (N = 32)	D (N = 31)	E (N = 19)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Favor some land as permanently zoned agricultural.....	30	50	50	64	74
Favor continued residential development.....	100	68	56	58	74
Prefer development by individual lots rather than by subdivision.....	40	58	59	65	57
Favor continued retail business development.	70	68	69	52	47
Favor neither retail nor industrial development.....	20	24	25	39	42
Would move if area became part of large subdivision.....	20	41	50	58	79
If moved, would move to established suburb..	70	62	28	13	11
Favor incorporation of parts of township in next 5 to 10 years.....	20	12	9	3	21
Favor some annexations to nearby cities as areas become urbanized.....	60	41	31	19	37
Favor liquor licenses within township.....	50	47	31	16	26

¹ See table 3 for dollar range of each category.

Some lacked hot water or indoor plumbing. There was little attempt to improve appearances. Most of these substandard houses had been built by their first occupants; only 16 percent were old farm structures. Over 85 percent of the farm structures used by nonfarm residents were in higher assessment categories.

The township zoning act and building code seem to have stopped the building of clearly substandard housing. The last such home was constructed in 1955, about the time these acts were adopted.

Substandard homes were more widely distributed throughout the four quarters of the township than other nonfarm housing, though 63 percent were in the more urbanized western part of the township. A little over half were along the blacktop roads, the rest on gravel side roads. In several places in the township there were two or three such houses within a block of each other, but this was not the common pattern.

Some substandard housing was quite near housing assessed considerably higher.

As noted previously, there is considerable turnover of tenants in such houses. About 40 percent of the residents had lived in the township more than 10 years, but a third had lived there less than 3 years though their homes were built earlier. Yet none were renters and a third owned their houses outright without a mortgage.

About a third of the residents of substandard housing had bought their houses from relatives or friends. The rest had bought on the open market or purchased land and built their own houses.

Most residents in substandard housing had a farm background (79 percent); 20 percent had farmed for 5 years or more. Most were from outside Ingham County (58 percent); only 5 percent had been raised in Alaledon Township. Yet 42 percent had relatives living in the township, though most of these were not farmers but other urbanites.

TABLE 9.--Opinions expressed about problems of local government, nonfarm families grouped by assessed value of residence

Opinions	Percentage of families with residences in tax assessment categories-- ¹				
	A (N = 10)	B (N = 34)	C (N = 32)	D (N = 31)	E (N = 19)
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Building codes too strict.....	0	3	6	6	26
Zoning and building codes most important township function.....	40	26	25	16	10
Major problem associated with urbanization is land use zoning and building codes.....	40	27	25	16	10
Schools major problem associated with urbanization.....	30	35	44	23	16
School taxes too low.....	40	29	16	3	0
School taxes too high.....	10	9	16	19	21
Schools worth taxes paid.....	100	77	81	81	63
Township functions more important than county functions.....	10	35	34	42	32
County functions more important than township functions.....	80	41	31	26	32

¹ See table 3 for dollar range of each category.

All but one of the household heads worked in blue collar jobs, most in Lansing or East Lansing. Almost two-thirds were labor union members. In about one-fifth of the homes the wife also worked. The largest families lived in this type of housing--some families had as many as seven children. Only 10 percent had no children; over half had three or more. Only 15 percent had no child of school or preschool age. Three-fourths of the families had four or more members. Ten percent of the respondents were divorced or separated, 5 percent widowed. No other assessment category contained divorced persons who had not remarried, or persons separated from husband or wife.

Income of such residents was higher than might be supposed; slightly under half reported total income of between \$5,000 and \$7,500, and an additional 25 percent reported income over \$7,500. Even given the tendency of respondents to inflate their reported incomes, the level was higher than

might be expected judging from the condition of the housing. Yet about half the respondents in this category reported financial difficulties.

The heads of these households were for the most part between 20 and 60 years old. Compared with other nonfarm residents, they had received the least formal education. Three-fourths were high school or grade school dropouts. Twenty percent, however, said they were high school graduates and half of these reported some college education. This group had the lowest proportion of families (42 percent) in which one or more children hoped to attend college.

This group also participated least in township or community activities. Only 10 percent belonged to the Parent-Teachers Association. Over two-thirds did not regularly attend a church. About the same number said they had not voted in the last township election. None knew that the township supervisor was their representative on the county board; three-fourths could not

name a township trustee, and only slightly over 10 percent knew the township supervisor by name. In most cases of a large "no opinion" response to questions asked in the survey, respondents in this group contributed the largest number of such replies.

Compared with respondents in other assessment categories, a lower proportion of those in the substandard housing category were concerned with land use regulation, and a larger proportion were opposed to strengthening building codes, considered school taxes too high, and were opposed to business and industrial development in the township.

As a group, the residents of substandard housing strongly favored preserving the rural farm atmosphere of the township, more so than members of any other assessment category. Three-fourths favored permanent agricultural zoning of some of the land; 80 percent felt high taxes might force farmers to sell out. This was the group most opposed to annexations, especially to the city of Lansing. Eighty percent said they would want to move if the area became heavily suburbanized.

If forced to move for one reason or another, half would want to move to another rural nonfarm area and 20 percent to a farm. Less than 15 percent would want to move to an established suburb or a large city.

They were like farmers in that they were most likely among nonfarmers to shop, go to church, or go for medical attention to the county seat or a nearby village rather than to the cities of Lansing or East Lansing.

Residents of substandard housing most frequently reported that they moved to the township because they liked the rural atmosphere. The above data suggest strongly that this fact characterized them well. They were not for the most part residents of substandard urban areas who had somehow moved into a rural area; rather they were farm oriented persons who wanted to live in a rural environment. Like residents of urban substandard housing, they had less education than other groups, were likely to be in financial difficulties, and worked as blue collar or unskilled labor.

Commercial Activities

The "do-it-yourself" orientation of many of the early nonfarm residents is reflected in the part they played in the commercial

development of the area. The 18 businesses in Alameda Township in 1961 can be divided into three categories: (1) those requiring little capital and begun as a sideline by residents seeking some extra income, (2) those that by their nature must be located in a rural area, and (3) those exploiting a peculiar advantage of Alameda Township itself.

Ten of the 18 township businesses began as the first type--they were started as sidelines by residents for extra income, without much investment of funds. Four of these have, however, developed into full-time enterprises. All but two of these enterprises were started by nonfarm residents, usually persons with a farm background. They include three beauty shops, two television repair shops, a catering service for wedding receptions and other affairs, an auto supply store, a furnace repair business, a trucking business for farm products, and a feed-grinding and feed-selling enterprise.

Businesses that require a rural environment were in every case started by nonfarm residents without farm background who had lately moved into the township. They include two dog and cat kennels, two nurseries, and a dump. Only two of these businesses require full time from their managers.

None of the three enterprises in the third category--commercial enterprises exploiting local resources--is owned by a nonfarm resident. They include a summer fishing resort on a small lake, a restaurant on the major highway which cuts across the edge of the township, and a small tool and die shop begun in a local concrete block building. The first is owned by an operating farmer; the second is managed by a professional restaurateur; the third is owned by a nonresident who was once a farmer.

All but 3 of the 18 businesses are located in the more urbanized western half of the township. Thirteen of the 18 businesses are operated by natives of Ingham County. Two of the three in the east half of the township are operated by farmers. At the time of the survey, half the ventures had been operating for 10 years or more.

Almost all the business operators in the township live in or next to the building where their business is located. Only one person, the owner of the tool and die shop, lived outside the township in 1961, and he expressed the intention of eventually moving to the township.

In contrast to the business ventures described above, most developers of subdivisions were nonresidents. All, however, had some association with the general area. Most lived in nearby communities.

One development was by a realty firm of a nearby city whose policy was to purchase small parcels in the Lansing area, plat them quickly, and sell them off. The developer of the largest subdivision was a contractor who, as he was reaching retirement age, decided to set up the subdivision as a place where he might build himself a home and find an occupation for his retirement years. Two other developers were residents of Lansing and East Lansing who purchased the land as a sideline investment having nothing to do with their regular method of earning a livelihood. Another was a worker in a Lansing factory who purchased the Alaiedon land to farm part time, but because of the poor return from farming decided to plat the land.

The two newest subdivisions are owned by established residents of the township, one a blue collar worker who had sold off individual lots to the point where he was required by county regulations to plat his development. The other subdivider is a farmer who decided to subdivide frontage lots for additional income.

Because subdividing has so far been a kind of sideline enterprise engaged in mostly by amateur developers familiar with the general area, it has been small in scale.

To summarize, the survey revealed three facts about business in this semi-rural township: (1) Nonfarm residents are the most likely to start small commercial enterprises requiring little capital; (2) most such entrepreneurs will be local residents with a farm background operating their business out of their homes; (3) outsiders with no farm background are generally responsible for commercial or manufacturing enterprises requiring some investment of funds and greater professional expertise.

NONFARMERS CONTRASTED WITH FARMERS

In the initial study, Alaiedon Township farmers were classified on the basis of acreage farmed and whether they held a city job. Four major types emerged: com-

mercial farmers, semiretired farmers, part-time commercial farmers, and suburban farmers.

The commercial farmers devoted full time to large-scale farming and tended to look upon farming as a thriving commercial enterprise. They provided most of the leadership in Alaiedon Township activities.

The semiretired farmers were older residents of the township who had been full-time farmers but in the process of gradual retirement had reduced their farming to a small scale. Presumably they had been the core of the township farm group at some earlier time when agriculture dominated completely the life and economy of township residents.

Part-time commercial farmers were few in number. All were engaged in large-scale farming and at the same time were employed full time in an off-farm job. They were young men whose eventual goal seemed to be to obtain enough capital and acreage to move into full-time farming as their only vocation. In the present report, these three types are merged into one group and are referred to as nonsuburban farmers, to distinguish them from the fourth type, suburban farmers.

The suburban farmers were those holding full-time city jobs while farming on a relatively small scale. They were either former full-time farmers who had taken city jobs and reduced their farming activities, or they were former urban residents who decided to try farming while retaining a city job as the main source of income. They made up the largest of the four groups of farmers.

Compared with the nonsuburban farmers, the suburban farmers and nonfarm residents tended to be younger and better educated, and to have higher incomes. They were more likely to have children of school age. More reported having mortgages on their property.

One would expect that the nonfarmers, even those with a rural background, would reveal less of a rural orientation than either nonsuburban farmers or suburban farmers, but that the suburban farmers would serve as a meeting point of the nonsuburban farmers and the nonfarmers. In table 10, the three groups are compared with respect to various family characteristics. As expected, suburban farmers were found on most points to be the intermediate type between the other two groups.

TABLE 10.--Percentage of farm and nonfarm families with specified characteristics

Characteristics	Nonsuburban farm families (N = 80)	Suburban farm families (N = 27)	Nonfarm families (N = 126)
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Family had resided in township--			
Less than 10 years.....	29	52	72
10 to 19 years.....	26	41	22
20 years or more.....	45	7	6
Respondent under 40 years of age.....	28	33	49
Respondent 50 years or over.....	58	40	22
Had children of preschool age.....	20	23	38
Had children in grade school.....	29	52	46
Had children in high school.....	15	34	29
Did not have children in school.....	64	26	26
Husband did not graduate from high school.....	53	45	39
Wife did not graduate from high school.....	35	27	23
Husband had college training.....	14	26	25
Wife had college training.....	18	26	20
Gross annual income below \$5,000.....	63	19	17
Gross annual income \$7,500 plus.....	10	37	44
Owned home or farm without mortgage.....	61	37	30
Belonged to a farm organization.....	60	26	6
Belonged to a labor union.....	4	48	38

Community Ties

Like the suburban farmers interviewed in the earlier study, roughly three-fourths of the nonfarmers interviewed held full-time jobs in Lansing or East Lansing. Their responses to questions about shopping and social activities showed much the same pattern of community ties as those of the suburban farmers.

In two respects nonfarmers showed greater urban orientation than the suburban farmers--more of them depended on the central cities for doctors, dentists, and hospital care; and more of them did their shopping for clothing in the central cities. The second difference was the less pronounced.

Both nonfarmers and suburban farmers tended to buy groceries and drugs from the local stores, to patronize the local

library, and to attend churches in the community, but not to the same extent as the nonsuburban farmers. All three groups made most of their furniture purchases in Lansing, but the nonsuburban farmers were more likely than the others to buy locally.

Despite their pattern of loose community ties, the nonfarmers were found to participate more frequently than either suburban or nonsuburban farmers in what may be described as neighborly activities--for example, belonging to car pools, borrowing tools, and exchanging baby sitting. Nonsuburban farm families, however, averaged 2.3 memberships in formal organizations, suburban farm families 2.7, and nonfarm families 1.8. The lower number of nonfarm memberships is mainly accounted for by lack of memberships in the local farm organization.

Local Government

In general, farmers in both groups participated in local government more than nonfarmers, and knew more about it (table 11). The chief exception was in voting turnout. Almost two-thirds of each group said they had voted in the most recent election. Also, nearly as large a percentage of nonfarmers as of farmers reported attending a township board meeting within the past 2 years. Surprisingly, the turnout of nonfarm residents at school meetings was very low. Less than a tenth of the nonfarmers had attended a school board meeting within the past 2 years, compared with over a fifth of the suburban farmers.

The commercial farmers, though less than one-third of all farmers and less than 10 percent of the total population, occupied all major township offices and five of the nine minor ones. The data suggest that the commercial farmers continue to maintain control because there has been little objection by members of other groups. Relatively few residents expressed dissatisfaction about township government--less than 15 percent of any group. Nonfarmers were in fact least dissatisfied; only 7 percent listed any complaints. Most residents expressed no opinion.

The data suggest that opposition in the immediate future is more likely to develop from suburban farmers than nonfarmers. Only one-third of the nonfarm sample re-

ported a division between old and new residents over the way the township should be run, but 50 percent of the suburban farmers said such a division existed. Less than 20 percent of the nonfarmers felt there were any divisions between farmers and nonfarmers. Sixty percent felt they were well enough represented in township government. "No opinion" responses were consistently most numerous in the nonfarmer group.

In the earlier study it was found that some farmers were indifferent because of a belief that township government was incapable of handling problems it faced. This same general attitude of unconcern on the part of nonfarmers seems to have been a consequence of their feeling that they did not know much about township government. When asked what the township government could do to handle problems resulting from urbanization, almost a third of the nonfarmers said they did not know. Only a few suggested that the township government had insufficient authority. Close to one-fifth of the farmers argued weakness of township government; less than one-sixth said they did not know what the township could do.

In the earlier study there were indications that farmers felt that county government sometimes hampered the activities of local township government. Farmers gave this as one reason for viewing township government as weak. Nonfarm residents were

TABLE 11.--Percentage of farm and nonfarm respondents giving specified answers about local government

Index of participation	Nonsuburban farmers (N = 80)	Suburban farmers (N = 27)	Nonfarm residents (N = 126)
	Percent	Percent	Percent
Could name supervisor.....	72	56	32
Could name one or more trustees.....	75	48	56
Could name all four trustees.....	14	0	2
Voted in last township election.....	59	67	60
Reported contact with township official.....	40	37	24
Reported attendance within past 2 years at meeting of:			
Township Board.....	25	15	19
School Board.....	14	22	9

asked about their views on county government--questions which were not in the farm survey. Only one-sixth of the nonfarm respondents knew that the township supervisor was their local representative on the County Board. When asked what were the most important functions of the county government, over half the nonfarmers admitted ignorance of its functions. Others often confused the functions of county and township government. Most nonfarmers were uncertain as to which government, county or township, was more important to them.

Despite their low attendance at school board meetings, nonfarmers generally had positive opinions about school taxes. The nonsuburban farm group was strongly opposed to increased property taxes for schools, and over one-third of them felt that the amount being spent for schools was too high. In contrast, only one-sixth of the nonfarm residents expressed this opinion, while another sixth said they thought the amount spent for schools was too low. High taxes for schools were regarded as the most important local issue by nonsuburban farmers; nonfarmers approved of present school tax levels. The suburban farmers' opinions were close to those of the nonfarmers.

Incorporation and Annexation

When confronted with the issues of incorporation or annexation, nonfarmers revealed a more "rural" position than farmers. Over three-fourths of the nonfarmers opposed the incorporation of parts of the township, compared with less than two-thirds of the nonsuburban farmers. Suburban farmers were least opposed to incorporation. All three groups showed about the same proportion, approximately 40 percent, opposed to annexation of urban areas of the township to nearby cities. However, when nonfarmers were asked about annexation of their own area of residence, 83 percent said they were opposed to it.

Nonfarmers were asked about the effects of annexation upon governmental services and how it would affect their taxes. Most of them thought that annexation would give them more services than needed and 91 percent thought that taxes would increase.

Nonfarmers want the township to retain its rural nature as long as possible. Over

half of those interviewed listed this as their first reason for moving to the township. Their only positive stands about local government were in favor of schools and against losing the rural character of their area.

Land Use

Alaiedon Township nonfarmers at this stage of township development supported continued agricultural operations; they gave more support to this idea, in fact, than many farmers did. The attitudes held by the nonfarmers will be of increasing importance to farmers. While these new residents showed little interest in local government at the time of the survey, they constitute a majority of the citizens, and political leadership could translate their opinions into policy.

Urbanization--How Soon?

In both surveys, township residents were asked to estimate how many years it would take for Alaiedon Township to become urbanized. Urbanization was defined as such a degree of urban settlement as to make extensive farming operations difficult or impossible. A nearby township that has some large tracts of vacant land remaining, but with little farming, was used as an illustration. We do not believe that the 18 months between interviews affects these estimates to a significant degree, since the most obvious new factor affecting urbanization was the new interstate highway, which had already been announced when the farm survey was begun.

Few farmers anticipated immediate urbanization. Nonfarmers assumed it would come more rapidly. About half the nonfarm sample expected it to occur within 10 years as compared to about a fifth of all farmers (table 12).

The estimates of all three groups were related to the area of the township in which they lived. A majority of the nonfarm residents living in the neighborhood of the projected freeway and in or near subdivisions expected general urbanization within 10 years; over three-fourths of those in isolated rural areas expected urbanization of this scale to be more than 10 years away. The people in the township most likely to anticipate the problems associated

TABLE 12.--Percentage of farm and nonfarm respondents giving specified estimates of when area will be urbanized

Estimate of urbanization	Nonsuburban farmers (N = 80)	Suburban farmers (N = 27)	Nonfarm residents (N = 126)
	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Less than 10 years.....	11	37	47
10 to 19.9 years.....	38	30	27
Over 20 years.....	29	22	9
Never.....	11	--	3
Don't know.....	11	11	14
Total.....	100	100	100

with urbanization were largely those who had already experienced some urbanization. Other residents presumably would not think seriously about the problem until they saw more evidence of it.

In the earlier study it was found that farm residents tended to view urbanization as a flood that slowly creeps out from the city rather than seeing it as a process that leapfrogs through rural areas according to where good roads to the city are available. They did not realize that suburbanites measure distance in minutes to work, not in miles. Nonfarm residents in isolated areas shared the farmers' attitude. Urbanization is not anticipated; like the measles it is recognized after it occurs.

Is Urbanization Welcome?

Farmers interviewed in the previous survey were not united in welcoming or discouraging continued urbanization of the township. Dividing farmers into groups on the basis of age shows that age affected their attitudes toward continued urbanization. Farmers of 65 and over wished to be let alone, and wanted few changes of any kind. Farmers under 45, who looked forward to the most productive years of their farming careers, favored zoning of some township lands permanently for agriculture. Farmers in their fifties were inclined to accept a gradual urbanization of the township, which they expected to occur generally in about 10 years--about the time, in fact, when they would be reaching retirement age and might wish to sell off land holdings.

The latter group, and presumably its viewpoint, was disproportionately represented in the political leadership of the township.

Attitude of nonfarmers to continued urbanization was based on different premises, and was therefore more ambivalent. They saw little profit in this process for themselves; in fact, they anticipated increased costs. Most nonfarm residents had recently chosen the township for their home, expected to stay there some time, and hoped to preserve its rural character as long as possible. Fifty-five percent favored "zoning that would assure that a large portion of Alaiedon Township land would remain agricultural." Most gave as their reason that they liked the rural atmosphere and lack of crowding that are associated with farming.

Two-thirds of the nonfarmers also said they favored continued residential development of the township. However, many who so responded frequently added comments that expressed a feeling of helplessness or fatalism, such as "It's inevitable," or "It will continue anyway." Later in the interview nonfarm respondents were asked directly if they thought the population movement into the township would continue; 96 percent thought that it would.

Fifty-eight percent of the nonfarmers wanted residential development by individual lots rather than by subdivision. Comments about "typical" subdivisions were that they were "crowded," that "all houses look alike," and that there was "no privacy." The subdivisions presently in Alaiedon are close in style to individual-lot development, which may explain why little criticism arose of present subdivision development in the township.

Reciprocal Attitudes of Nonfarmers and Farmers

Coupled with the reluctance of the non-farm residents of the township to see it become more urbanized was a general friendliness toward the farmers of the area.

We have already seen two indications of this attitude: Nonfarmers felt their interests were adequately represented in a township government in which most offices were held by farmers; and they felt the division between farmers and nonfarmers was not serious. Ninety-six percent of non-farm respondents said the farmers caused them no inconvenience. In contrast, a sizable number of farmers complained that nonfarmers sometimes interfered with farming operations.

Contacts of nonfarm residents with township farmers were not great considering the large number of nonfarmers who had been raised on a farm. Only 6 percent of the nonfarm families had a member who belonged to a farm organization, 28 percent had a member in a county extension group (including 4-H), and about the same number reported contact with a county extension staff member. Forty-four percent said they had had social contacts with township farmers within the last year.

Only 42 percent of the nonfarm respondents, as compared to 78 percent of all farmers interviewed, felt that property taxes might force farmers to sell their lands; however, three-fourths of them agreed that farmland should be assessed for its agricultural value rather than its urban value. But, to a question asking (without stating a reason) if assessments should be lower on farmland than on other types of property, only 46 percent said "yes."

The attitudes expressed confirm the conclusion that the first wave of nonfarmers in a rural area, as represented in our sample, wished to preserve the rural atmosphere of the township as long as possible. They were prepared, if they were sure there was a just reason for it, to permit some reduction in the rate of farmland assessments. They presumably would not favor this, however, if the farmlands were sold for urban uses.

In general, the households of ex-farmers (those who had farmed for 5 years or more) and the households in which only the wife was born on a farm were those most likely to have what might be called "farm" view-

points; but there were notable exceptions. Ex-farmers felt it was unlikely that property taxes would force farmers to sell their land. They also were most likely of all nonfarm groups to voice complaints about the activities of township and county government, and thought it would be longer before urbanization occurred.

In a few respects, nonfarmers with urban backgrounds (neither husband or wife born on a farm) differed significantly from nonfarmers with a farm background. More favored action on zoning, planning, and building controls. They also tended to regard county government as more important than township government, and could see some prospects of better services resulting from annexation.

FINDINGS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

Overall, this study of nonfarm residents of a township in the early stages of urbanization showed that the earliest nonfarm residents in a farming area may be expected to favor building a residential community in a rural setting, but that later nonfarm migrants to the community will not necessarily share this view.

The first major finding was that most of these early settlers had some farm background--one of the parents of the family was raised on a farm, or the family had itself farmed for 5 years or more. The effect of this characteristic seems to have been to incline these nonfarmers in many respects to farm viewpoints. However, emergence of separate interests based on city jobs and acceptance of urban values resulted in some divergence. The most important divergence was in respect to present school taxes, which nonfarmers viewed more favorably than did farmers.

The second major finding was that the earliest nonfarm settlement was characterized by a pioneering type of resident. A large number of the early residents were blue collar workers who worked with their hands; many had made extensive improvements on their homes or had built them themselves. The same jack-of-all-trades viewpoint was reflected in the setting up of the first businesses and even the platting of subdivisions. Generally, these were started as part-time operations. The beauty shop in the basement for a side income was typical of such projects.

The third major finding was that these early nonfarm settlers regarded further

urban development as inevitable but hoped it might be guided to preserve a rural residential environment. Individual lots were favored over large scale subdivisions, permanent agricultural zoning was favored, lower tax rates for farmland were favored, and emphasis was placed on "proper" industrial and commercial land uses. The overall goal expressed was that of creating a residential community in a rural setting.

The fourth major finding was that in Alaiedon Township the character of the nonfarm group appeared to be changing, with the change just beginning at the time of the survey. The direction was toward settlement by more white collar workers, in subdivision homes that had been built for them. Such persons had higher income and more education, and were less likely to have a farm background. In terms of composition of the township population, families with younger heads of the household and several children of school age would in the future make up an increasing percentage of the total. With this change, further urbanization of the township, accompanied by increased land use controls and strengthening of local governmental actions, was likely. Commercial and residential development would be encouraged, with less opposition to large scale subdividing and less support for permanent agricultural zoning. Opinion appeared to be shifting in favor of development similar to that of established suburbs.

The last major finding concerned non-farm housing that was clearly substandard. Substandard houses were occupied chiefly by persons with a farm background. The residents of such housing had many of the characteristics of occupants of similar urban housing, except that their outlook and background were strongly agricultural, and they reported relatively high incomes. No such housing has been constructed since the passage and enforcement of the building code and zoning act.

The implications of these findings for farmers in Alaiedon Township and similar areas are reasonably clear. If farmers want to guide urban land use development in their area, whether in order to preserve a rural environment or to preserve land values, there is every reason for them to

act early in the process of urbanization. This study suggests that it is during the early stages of nonfarm settlement that they will most likely have the support of the nonfarm residents in preserving a rural atmosphere. Also, action taken early could prevent dotting the landscape with jerry-built shacks. It is also probable, though this was not explored in the study, that development could be guided in ways that would be least likely to interfere with continued farm operations. Primarily, farmers need to recognize that urban development occurs along good roads that permit quick commuting to the city and that selling off of property for urban uses is not a private matter that concerns only the farmer making the sale, but may affect the later value of all farmland.

Farmers would do well to consider experimenting with new methods of taxation and zoning for farmland. Nonfarmers say they are willing to make tax concessions for land which will continue to be agricultural. Such an approach seems likely to prove more successful than simply favoring lower tax levels. It is less likely that nonfarmers would favor such arrangements for land held speculatively. Schools provide the major point of disagreement between farmers and nonfarmers. Nonfarmers geared to advancement in an urban society want more than 1-room country schools. Many say they are willing to pay increased taxes for such purposes. Rising school taxes are likely to be the first major impact of urbanization on the commercial farm community because, given the relative importance of nonfarmers in terms of population, farmers are likely to lose this battle.

The major implication of this study is that rational development of farm areas for urban or mixed urban and farm uses requires forethought and cooperative action. Agricultural values and interests will not be protected by letting nature take its course. Preferences should be thought through and introduced into the political process as alternatives that might be chosen. No one else is likely to do this if the farmer does not. The time for acting most effectively is likely to be when the first signs of nonfarm use appear.

